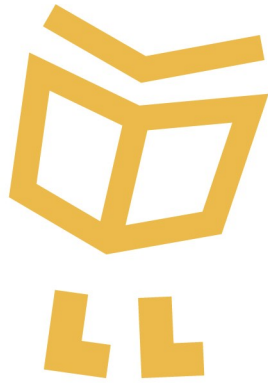


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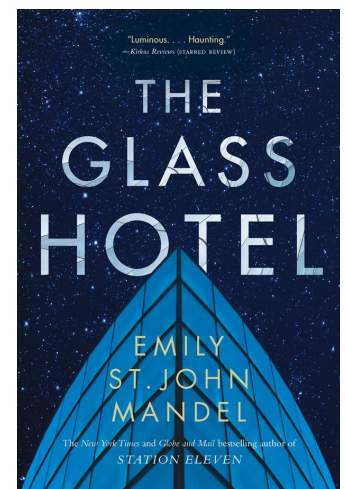


The Glass Hotel

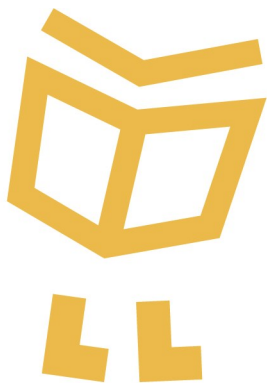
Emily St. John Mandel

Discussion Questions

1. On page 35, Raphael tells Walter, “Our guests in Caiette want to come to the wilderness, but they don’t want to be in the wilderness. They just want to look at it, ideally through the window of a luxury hotel.” Examine the meaning of Raphael’s words, paying close attention to the ways in which this notion of curated reality permeates the novel. In what other instances is the truth framed in such a way so as to distort it?
2. Explore Paul and Vincent’s relationship. What are their earliest memories of each other? How does their relationship evolve as both characters move into adulthood? Why is Paul compelled to pass Vincent’s videos off as his own? Is either character able to achieve closure with respect to their relationship?
3. Discuss Vincent’s five-minute videos. What meaning does she find in this practice? Why does she choose water as her primary subject? Consider, as you answer this question, her grandmother’s words when she first gave the camera as a gift: “If you can’t stand to look at the world directly, maybe it’s possible to look at it through the viewfinder” (page 68).
4. Explore the theme of opportunity as it is depicted in the novel. What opportunities are available to Vincent? To Paul? To other young people in the early aughts? How does each character’s access to opportunity --- or lack thereof --- affect their fate? Is there such thing as a “good opportunity”? Why or why not?
5. Discuss the conclusion of the novel, exploring, as you do so, the symmetry between Vincent’s death and that of her mother. How do you understand Vincent’s fate? Do you agree with Vincent that her mother’s death was an accident, as she asserts in the final paragraph of the novel? Why is Vincent able to come to peace with her mother’s death only after she herself dies?



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About the Author

Emily St. John Mandel is the author of five previous novels. *The Glass Hotel* was a #1 national bestseller, was a finalist for the Scotiabank Giller Prize, was selected by President Barack Obama as one of his favourite books of 2020, and has been translated into twenty-three languages. *Station Eleven* won the Toronto Book Award and the Arthur C. Clarke Award, was a finalist for a National Book Award and the PEN/Faulkner Award, has been translated into thirty-two languages, and will soon be a limited series on HBO Max. Mandel lives in New York City with her husband and daughter.

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